

The ORGANIZING
Exclerator



Create Your Life.

Steven Huskey

TheExcleratedLife.com

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THE ORGANIZING EXCELERATOR

Introduction

“As within, so without.” This principle tells us that our external world is a reflection of our internal world. If your external world is peaceful and ordered, then your inner life is peaceful and ordered. If your inner life is chaotic, your external world is likely to be a mess.

The interesting thing is this – when you change one, the other changes. If you “clean up your act”, you will see your environment becoming more orderly and organized. If you get busy straightening out your environment, your thoughts and emotions become less chaotic and disorganized.

You can change either one to affect the other, however, it is generally easier to change the external part – to bring order to your external life and your environment. The **ORGANIZING EXCELERATOR** can help you do that.

The **ORGANIZING EXCELERATOR** consists of ten areas where organization is beneficial: Home, Office, Personal, Financial, Paper, Time, Clutter, Storage Areas, Computer, and General. Each area has ten principles, strategies, and actions to help you become better organized in that area. The goal is to become “well enough organized” so that you can find what you need when you need it and bring more order into your life.

You can use the **ORGANIZING EXCELERATOR** on your own or with your coach.

What is an *Excels*erator?

*Excels*erator is a combination of two words:

excel - to shine, to be outstanding, be first rate and exceptional
and

accelerate - to move forward at an increasing pace.

*Excels*erators are ideas, concepts, and programs that help you move forward in creating the life you want while increasing your ability to be outstanding, first rate, and exceptional.

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A life of well-being, meaning and purpose

How To Play

Step 1

Read each of the ten principles, strategies, and actions under the first section. If this is true for you or you are already doing this step, put a check mark in the box for that statement.

Repeat this process for the remaining sections, until you have worked through each of the ten sections.

Be a rigorous grader and be honest with yourself. Only give yourself the check if you have mastered the step. If a step does not apply to you, take credit for that step and give yourself the check. You may do this for up to five of the steps. You may reword a step to make it better fit your situation. You may reword up to five of the steps.

Step 2

Count the number of check marks you have in each section. Go to the chart and color one rectangle for each check in each section. Begin with number one and work towards ten. The chart gives you a visual representation of your progress.

Step 3

Keep playing until you have filled in the entire chart. This can take from one to six months or longer. Don't get discouraged and be gentle with yourself. "No shame and no blame." Aim to make each action a habit. You can work on your own or with your coach.



THE ORGANIZING *EXCELERATOR*

Organizing <i>Excelsator</i> Progress Chart										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Home										
Office										
Personal										
Financial										
Paper										
Time										
Clutter										
Computer										
Storage Areas										
General										

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Home

- My home is free of piles and clutter.
- I only have things that I use or that are meaningful and/or beautiful.
- I use a laundry sorter to sort dirty clothes as they are removed.
- I develop and use simple systems and routines for household tasks such as meal planning, grocery shopping, housekeeping, and other recurring household tasks.
- If I don't use coupons, I don't clip them. If I use coupons, I keep them in a coupon sorter.
- I have ample storage space for media collections – tapes, CDs, DVDs, magazines. I return these items to their home after I've finished using them.
- I use "centers" for each activity I engage in (hobbies, bill paying, cooking, etc.). All the supplies and equipment I need for the activity are stored in its center.
- I give each separate room or functional area (center) a name, based on how it is used. I share this name with others, so we all know what a name refers to.
- If I use tools or supplies (pens, scissors, notepads, recycle bins, cleaning supplies, etc.) in multiple locations, I keep one of each tool or item at each location.
- I don't store items for people who don't live in my home.

Office

- My office is free of piles and clutter.
- My desk top is uncluttered and only contains material for the task or project I am currently working on.
- I clean off my desk at the end of each work day.
- I clean out my inbox at least once each day.
- I use a filing and retrieval system that is easy to use and understand.
- I file at regular intervals so papers don't pile up. I return files to their drawer as soon as I finish using them.
- I have a pleasant, well-equipped work area.
- I have specific times for answering e-mails, voice mails, and for making phone calls and I only do those tasks during this time.
- I schedule blocks of uninterrupted time for completing important projects.
- I have a separate business checking account and keep all business and personal expenses separate.

Personal

- I use an organizing system that works for me, that fits my life and my personality.
- I only go shopping when I need something specific.
- I display keepsakes where I can enjoy them.
- I get everything done when it is due.
- I find everything I need when I need it.
- When I bring in something new, I remove something old.
- If a task can be done in five minutes or less, I do it right away. If a task will take longer, I add it to my Master List for scheduling into my calendar.
- I don't do or schedule things that don't need to be done. I let them go and I let the guilt of not doing them go, too.
- I don't do things for other people (including children) that they are perfectly capable of doing for themselves.
- My Master List contains only tasks that bring joy to me and others and / or create wealth and / or move me forward.

Financial

- I always pay bills on time.
- I have recurring bills set up on an automatic pay system.
- I have one location for paying bills and it is well stocked with all the supplies I need for bill paying.
- I balance my check book at least once per month.
- I know how long I should keep important financial documents and I have a system for storing them the required period of time.
- I have a safety deposit box or fire proof safe for important papers.
- All my tax return information (receipts, documentation) is stored in a single location.
- All my tax returns have been filed and my taxes are up to date.
- I have a Master List of all financial documents that includes account or policy numbers, key contact information, and location of the document.
- I have an up-to-date will that includes medical and durable powers of attorney and a living will.

Paper

- I have a filing system that I use and understand.
- I own a high quality paper shredder.
- I shred things that need to be shredded as I finish with them.
- I have no unopened mail over three days old.
- I weed files quarterly.
- I never lose or misplace bills or important papers.
- I know where all my important papers – insurance policies, titles, deeds, financial documents, marriage licenses, birth certificates, passports – are located and I can get to them right away if needed.
- I clean out my inbox at least once each day.
- When I pick up an item from my inbox, I act on it, file it, refer it to someone else for action, or discard it. I don't shuffle papers.
- I don't file or keep papers that I don't need, that I won't ever refer to, or that contain information I could get from another source.



Time

- I use a tickler file or other system to remind me of important tasks, dates, and appointments.
- I never miss important appointments.
- I use one calendar and keep all scheduled tasks and appointments on it.
- I keep a Master List of all my tasks and activities.
- When a new task arises, I add it to my Master List and prioritize it with the other things on the list.
- I plan weekly my schedule for the coming week.
- I schedule blocks of time for important tasks.
- I schedule personal time and keep it sacred.
- I schedule time for tasks that I do periodically.
- I set time limits and deadlines for myself.

Clutter

- I don't have any broken toys, appliances, electronics, or tools that can't be repaired.
- I discard newspapers after I read them.
- I have no more than three months' issues of magazines.
- I am on the "Do not mail" lists for junk mail.
- I have cancelled magazines and catalogs that I no longer want or use.
- I don't have warranties or product manuals for items I no longer own.
- I don't have more of anything than I can use.
- I have purged the things I haven't used and clothes I haven't worn in the past year (except for seasonal items or specialty tools).
- I plan time for clean up after I finish a project or activity. I don't allow leftovers from past activities to clog up my space.
- I don't have anything laying about, waiting for me to decide how to deal with it. I make decisions about what to do with things right away and I do it.

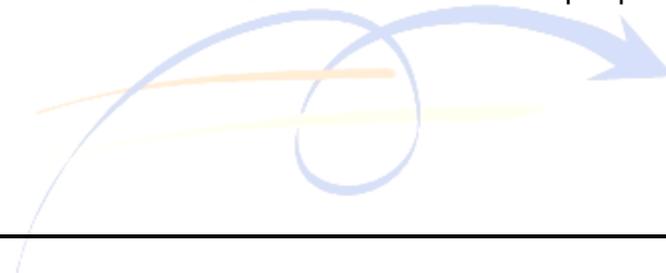


Computer

- I have a system for storing and retrieving information on my computer that I use and understand.
- I back up my computer files at least once a week and store a copy of the backup in another location.
- I clear out my e-mail inbox once a day.
- I have a system for filing and referencing e-mail that is easy to use and simple to understand.
- I use the "4 D" system for handling e-mail: Delete it, Do it, Delegate it, Defer it.
- I use a spam filter to stop junk e-mail.
- I have unsubscribed from any e-newsletters that I no longer read.
- I have discarded outdated and unused computer software, CDs, disks, and manuals.
- I purge unneeded files and e-mails at least once each quarter.
- I am 90% paperless: I don't print out e-mails or other computer documents unless I have an essential reason to do so. I store most documents electronically.

Storage Areas

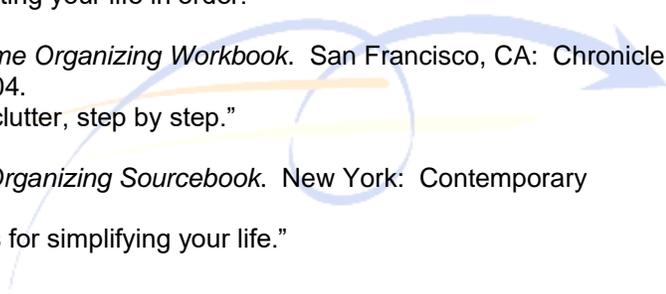
- I hang up my clothes or put them in the laundry when I take them off.
- I have nothing in my closet that I haven't worn in the past year.
- I don't pay to store things that I will never use.
- I have ample storage space.
- I have enough bookshelves for all my books.
- Before I store anything, I ask, "Will I use this again?" If the honest answer is "No", then I don't keep it.
- It is easy to retrieve and return things to their storage areas. (I don't have to move one thing to get to another, or unstack boxes, etc.)
- I store similar items together in a container. I don't jumble many different items in one container.
- When a collection outgrows its container, I weed the collection – I don't get another container.
- When a storage area gets full, I weed it right away. I let go of the things that no longer have value to me and share them with people who do value them.



General

- I have a home for every thing.
- I label everything.
- I return things to their home after I finish using them.
- Things that are used together have homes together.
- I create and use reference lists.
- I create and use systems to accomplish routine tasks.
- I group similar activities, tasks, and errands
- I keep my To Do lists, schedules, calendars, instruction checklists, notes, and other lists and information consolidated in one location.
- I store tools, implements, and supplies close to where they are used.
- I make decisions about things and then act on them. I have let go of things on my To Do list that I am never going to do.

Resources

- GRACIA, MARIA: "Get Organized Now", October 10, 2008,
<http://www.getorganizednow.com/>
"Discover thousands of tips and ideas to help you organize your home, organize your office and organize your life."
- LEVINE, KAREN. *Keeping Life Simple*. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1996.
"7 guiding principles, 500 tips and ideas."
- SMALLIN, DONNA. *Organizing Plain & Simple*. North Adams, MA: Storey Publishing, 2003.
"A ready reference guide with hundreds of solutions to your everyday clutter challenges."
- SMALLIN, DONNA. *The One-Minute Organizer*. North Adams, MA: Storey Publishing, 2004.
"500 tips for getting your life in order."
- STARR MERYL. *The Home Organizing Workbook*. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books LLC, 2004.
"Clearing your clutter, step by step."
- WADDILL, KATHY. *The Organizing Sourcebook*. New York: Contemporary Books, 2001.
"Nine strategies for simplifying your life."
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Requests to the author for permission should be addressed to the following email: Steven@my-excelerator.com

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